PART XX.—FREE GRANTS OF TIMBER.

1. Applications for free grants of wood for chávdis, agricultural implements, &c., should be promptly complied with. (G. R. No. 5191, dated 11th September 1876.)

2. The value of free grants of wood is very much reduced by delay on the part of the Forest Department in supplying timber. The Conservator will take care that there may be no complaints on this subject, and it will be the duty of the Collector to prevent any unnecessary delay. (G. R. No. 2331, dated 3rd May 1880.)

3. Government do not consider it necessary to compel the Postal Department to pay for the comparatively small quantity of wood which is apparently required by it for sheds for postal runners, torches, &c. Government, however, expect that the Commissioner and the Conservator of Forests will take all measures needed to prevent any abuse of the privilege on the part of the subordinates of the Postal Department and injury to the forests. The wood should be cut in such forests as the Forest Officers consider it may be cut in without injury, and it should be supplied to the Postal Department free of all charges except the expense incurred in cutting and removing it, the latter being arranged for by the Postal authorities themselves. (G. Rs. Nos. 4061, dated 5th August 1880, 8812, dated 8th November 1884, and 1742, dated 28th February 1885.)

4. It was never intended that free grants of wood should be made to men whose resources would enable them without much difficulty to purchase it. (G. R. No. 1771, dated 15th March 1882.)

5. In the Southern Division when wood is given free for any purpose for use in outside districts the value of the free grant should be assessed on an estimate of the average auction-sale rates of the current year or the year previous according to circumstances. In Kánara and Belgaum the value should be calculated according to the seigniorage or royalty fees.

In the Northern Division the year's auction-sale rates in a district should be taken as the standard for calculating the value of free grants of wood which may be made therein.

(G. Rs. Nos. 2126, dated 12th April 1881, 3371, dated 11th June 1881, and 3707, dated 28th June 1881.)

6. The Divisional Forest Officers are empowered to make free grants of wood and other forest produce up to the value in any year of Rs. 5 on their own authority, and up to the value of Rs. 20 with the sanction of the Conservator, as payment for service to any member of a wild tribe who may have merited such a grant by assistance rendered by him to the Forest Department. (G. Rs. Nos. 7658,

dated 26th September 1884, and 7250, dated 30th October 1888.)

7. The Assistant and Deputy Collectors in the Panch Mahâls and in the Mándvi Táluka of Surat are empowered to make free grants of timber of the value of Rs. 20, a half-yearly return of such grants being submitted to the Collector for incorporation in the return required by Government. (G. R. No. 2059, dated 1st April 1887.)

8. There is no objection to the submission of recommendation for the grant of wood free of charge to agricultural labourers or sub-tenants of registered cultivators in special cases. (G. R. No. 2614, dated 27th March 1885.)

9. Abuses are so common in connection with the free grants of wood that in all cases in which such grants are made, the Mámlatdárs should be held responsible for the wood being applied to the purpose for which it is granted and he should report to the Collector after inspection of the newly built houses. (G. R. No. 3420, dated 11th May 1886.)

10. His Excellency the Governor in Council having had the question of free grants of timber in the various districts of the Presidency under consideration, and having ascertained the great diversity of practice which obtains, is pleased to issue the following orders for the guidance of district officers.

(2). The objects for which free grants may usually be made are—

(*a*) the relief of poor people whose houses have been destroyed either by fire or flood;

(*b*) in special cases the construction of dwellings where members of wild tribes or new settlers are too poor to purchase wood;

(*c*) agricultural purposes in cases in which it is satisfactorily shown that such grants are absolutely necessary.

(3). In many, if not in most, of such cases it is evident that it is unnecessary to trouble Government with references, and His Excellency the Governor in Council is accordingly pleased to direct that—

(*a*) in all tálukas in which there is natural forest, the Commissioner of the Division is empowered to sanction free grants of timber of the value of Rs. 50 for the objects specified in paragraph 2 in such individual cases as are recommended by the Divisional Forest Officer or Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of the táluka, and supported by the Collector of the district;

(*b*) half-yearly returns of such grants should be submitted to Government through the Commissioners by each Collector giving full particulars of the grants made in his district;

(*c*) copies of such returns should be sent to the Divisional Forest Officer by the Collector, and they should be embodied in Forest Adminis-

tration Reports, the Conservator making any remarks which may appear to him to be called for on the working of the rules;

(*d*) free grants exceeding Rs. 50 in value in individual cases should be submitted to Government for sanction in all cases.

(4). Commissioners of Divisions may also sanction free grants of timber up to the value of Rs. 50 to *Táluka* Local Boards for improvement of local communications in bridging nálas, water-courses, &c. These grants should be separately specified in the half-yearly returns required by Rule 3 (*b*) above.

(5). These orders are not applicable to Sind, where the existing practice which was confirmed by Government Resolution No.* 5977, dated 12th November 1880, may be allowed to continue.

(G. R. No. 1051, dated 15th February 1887.)

(6). Commissioners may also sanction free grants of timber up to the value of Rs. 50 in each case for the repair and construction of village school-houses.

(G. R. No. 4073, dated 31st May 1895.)

11. The orders in Government Resolution No. 1051, dated 15th February 1887, are not applicable to Kánara, where the permit rules sanctioned by Government in 1872 continue in force. (G. R. No. 1728, dated 19th March 1887.)

12. Free grants of wood for idol cars should be considered to fall within Rule 14 of the Kánára Permit Rules. (G. R. No. 3401, dated 13th April 1892.)

13. Free grants of wood in the Thána and Kolába Districts should be regulated in accordance with the

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* Extract from Government Resolution No. 5977, dated 12th November 1880:—

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Memorandum from the Commissioner in Sind, No. 3294, dated 10th September 1880—Stating that in the opinion of the Collectors and Superintendents in Sind, the privilege which has always been conceded to cultivators of cutting wood on waste lands must be continued, that free grants of timber from Government forest reserves are only occasionally required to be made when a whole village has been burnt down, and in such cases the custom has been for the Collector to report to the Commissioner and obtain sanction to the grant of such timber as is required from Government forests, and that the rules laid down for the Presidency are, it will be seen, framed to meet an entirely different set of circumstances from those prevailing in Sind and should not apply to that province; and adding that in every part of Sind wild tribes are to be met with, but more especially along the frontiers and in the Thar and Párkar District.

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RESOLUTION—

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5. As regards Sind, His Excellency the Governor in Council concurs with the Commissioner in thinking that for the reasons stated by Mr. Erskine the new ruling concerning the previous obtaining of Government sanction to the free grants of timber should not be held applicable to that province. Government, however, rely upon the Commissioner to take effectual measures to prevent any undue or unnecessary injury to the Government forests and any abuse of the privilege of procuring wood free of cost.

rules contained in Government Resolution No. 1051, dated 15th February 1887. (G. Rs. Nos. 4625, dated 3rd July 1890, and 6794, dated 20th September 1893.)

14. The powers granted by Government Resolution No. 1051, dated 15th February 1887, are restricted to tálukas in which there is natural forest. And the whole intention of the system is to allow the population, and particularly the agricultural population, dwelling in the vicinity of the forests a privilege which can conveniently be exercised by them without material detriment to the public interests. It has never been contemplated that it should be incumbent on Government to give wood free by way of charity to members of any community whose houses may be destroyed. In case of a great calamity Government may appropriately assist by grants of wood, but it is to be remembered that the grants made under the rules with regard to the powers of the several officers are restricted to the tálukas and to the inhabitants of tálukas in which there is forest.

The value of the wood specified in the rules is the value of the trees as they stand in the forest, and it is contemplated that grantees should make their own arrangements for felling and carrying the wood, as people living in the vicinity of the forest conveniently can do. The value of wood at depôts or in towns is a very different thing and varies according to distance from the forests. It would be impossible in any rules to make provision as to the limit of value of wood got at such places. If in any cases the persons to whom free grants of wood are made can appropriately get the wood at depôts within or close to the forest area or at departmental cuttings, there is of course no objection, but this is a matter for arrangement by the Forest Officers and not for regulation by rules.

Government accept the proposal that Divisional Forest Officers should have the power of making grants up to the value of Rs. 20. It is desirable that Forest Officers should have the opportunity of aiding people living in the vicinity of the forests and of possibly thereby gaining co-operation.

(G. R. No. 1662, dated 2nd March 1897.)

15. The 15th April and the 15th October in each year should be fixed as the dates on which the half-yearly returns required by Government Resolution No. 1051, dated 15th February 1887, should be submitted. These returns should relate to the half-yearly periods ending 31st March and 30th September, respectively, and should be in the following form. In submitting the returns the Collectors should give *totals*.

Return of free grants of timber made in the district of under Government Resolution No. 1051 of 15th February 1887, Revenue Department, during the half year ending 18 .

Name of Tá-luka.	Name of Vil-lage.	Grant to whom made.	Object for which grant is made as specified in Rule 2, clauses *a*, *b*, *c*.	Descrip-tion and quality of timber granted.	Value of timber granted.			Circum-stances which rendered the grant expe-dient.	Date of appli-cation for free grant.	Number and date of order of the Commis-sioner sanc-tioning the grant.	Remarks.
					Rs.	a.	p.				

N. B.—Grants to Local Boards and the objects for which they are made should be separately specified as directed in Rule 4.

No. of 18 .

Submitted to Government in the Revenue Department.

Through the Commissioner, C.D.

(G. Rs. Nos. 1647, dated 17th March 1887, 2060, dated 1st April 1887, 4060, dated 4th July 1887, 1662, dated 2nd March 1897.)

16. In cases where the alienee has forest rights, the rayats of alienated villages should look to him for free grants of timber; in cases where the forest rights are vested in Government, there is no objection to allow them grants as if they were inhabitants of unalienated villages. (G. Rs. Nos. 3752, dated 20th June 1887, and 5486, dated 18th August 1887.)

17. Special grants of timber or other forest-produce, free or at favourable rates, for specific purposes, require the sanction of the Government of India if they exceed the following values :—

(1) For the construction of large works of public utility, such as railways, tramways, and the like—Rs. 5,000.

(2) To village communities, public bodies, Departments of Government, or sections of the community in their collective capacity—Rs. 1,000.

(3) In other cases—Rs. 500.

Within these limits, and subject to the principles laid down in Circular No. 8-F., dated 21st May 1895, such grants may be sanctioned by the Local Government; but all concessions of whatever value made under (1) for the construction of railways or tramways must be reported at once to the Government of India. The Local Government may delegate to the Conservator the power of sanction (subject to the above limits) up to the value of Rs. 1,000 in any one case.

(G. I., R. & A., No. 811-F., dated 21st May 1895; *vide* G. R. No. 4832, dated 27th June 1895.)